



TALK OF THE TOWN

Town of Hillsborough Newsletter: March 2022

Pump Stations Are a Costly Part of Sewer Service

Did you know that Hillsborough has more pump stations than a typical municipality of its size? The town's 26 pump stations pose both physical and financial challenges for the town's wastewater infrastructure. Gravity is the most cost-effective way to transport wastewater.

What's a pump station?

Pump stations help sewage flow past an elevated area, such as a hill, by pumping or lifting the sewage from a lower to a higher elevation. Once past the elevated point, the sewage can flow again by gravity.

Why so many pump stations?

Hillsborough has pump stations because of its hilly terrain. Many were installed years ago when lower costs up front were preferred despite the long-term costs of maintaining and replacing pumps or upgrading and replacing the stations. Per million gallons treated, Hillsborough has 3 times as many pump stations as Mebane and nearly 12 times as many as Raleigh.



The Corbinton Commons Pump Station is 1 of 26 pump stations the town operates. It pumps wastewater from the Orange High School and Governor Burke Road area.



The Churton Grove Pump Station requires monthly vacuuming to remove grease, wipes and rags. Only toilet paper and bodily waste are flushable. *Photo below:* Wipes and feminine hygiene wrappers are removed from a pump by town staff.

What makes pump stations expensive?

Pump stations require experienced staff to work on electrical and mechanical components. Staff visually inspects each station, records runtime hours, checks for obvious defects and cleans the "floats" or pressure-sensing transponders weekly.

Three times a week, town employees clean out "rag catches" that catch wipes. Before staff crafted and installed these catchers, so-called "flushable" wipes were clogging pumps and shutting them down multiple times a week.

Cranes and trucks are needed to complete work on the stations. Pump stations are vacuumed at least twice a year and some monthly to remove grease and rags that could lead to pump failures.

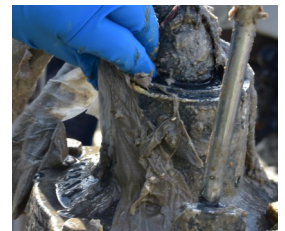
Pumps cost thousands of dollars. The stations have to be updated and replaced,

costing millions of dollars.

Maintenance and upgrades are important to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and fines from the state.

How can you help control costs?

Help keep items out of the wastewater system including: wipes that are marketed as flushable, rags and the wrappers of feminine hygiene products.



More information

Visit www.hillsboroughnc.gov to access the Water and Sewer Rates FAQ and the Utilities section.

Cpl. Tereasa Matthews to Retire

Cpl. Tereasa Matthews will retire from the Hillsborough Police Department in March after 22 years of service to the town.

Matthews' career with the Hillsborough Police Department began when she started Basic Law Enforcement Training in January 2000. Upon graduating from training, she became a patrol officer. Over her career, she also has served as a community police officer and a patrol sergeant.

Matthews especially has enjoyed connecting people in need with organizations that can help. After serving as a patrol sergeant, Matthews rejoined the Investigations and Community Services Division as the community service and domestic violence assistance coordinator two years ago.

"It's always been about community policing or community service for me," Matthews said. "I've always enjoyed meeting new people and working with the public and being of service to people in different ways."

Matthews was a correctional officer before her sister suggested they both consider careers in law enforcement. Her sister found a different career path, but Matthews was quickly accepted into training and recruited by the Town of Hillsborough. Over the last two decades, Matthews — who was known as Officer King until her marriage in 2017 — has been a friendly presence at community events including Autism Awareness events, the Hillsborough Police Department's basketball camp and Fairview Live.

"Corporal Matthews has had a huge impact on our department and our community and has been directly responsible for so much of our community engagement success," Police Chief Duane Hampton said. "She leaves a big hole for us to fill and she will be missed, but we could not be happier for her as she moves to a new phase of her life."

In recent years, Matthews has enjoyed working with the young officers beginning their careers as she finishes up hers.

"They have fresh eyes and new insight and take something old school and upgrade it," Matthews said. "I like seeing the different ways they do things."

Matthews is looking forward to traveling in her retirement.

Her last day with the town will be March 31.



Other Reminders

Shred-a-thon — Orange County's annual drive-thru shred-a-thon will be offered in Hillsborough 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 2 behind The Home Depot, 625, Hampton Pointe Drive.

Creek Week — Orange County Creek Week is March 12-19. For events, see the Orange County Creek Week page at www.orangecountync.gov.

Chlorine disinfection and hydrant flushing — The town uses a chlorine disinfectant and flushes hydrants in March. The water is safe to drink and use. See the news release on the town website for information.

Bulk items — Bulk items will be collected March 14-18. Collection is the second full week of the month with the week starting on Sunday. See the Garbage Collection page on the town website for more information.

Stories with HPD — Hillsborough police officers are reading children's books at the library the third Wednesday of the month. Sign up for a 30-minute session from 4 to 6 p.m. by calling the library at 919-245-2532.

State help available for water bills — The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services has expanded its program to help families pay water bills whether or not their services have been disconnected. Call 800-662-7030.

Emergency housing helpline — The Emergency Housing Assistance program may be able to provide help to Orange County residents struggling with rent, mortgage or utility payments. Call 919-245-2655 or email HousingHelp@orangecountync.gov to receive an application.